

**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND**

**IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2017**

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**S E N A T E R E S O L U T I O N**

**HONORING AND THANKING THE HONORABLE M. TERESA PAIVA WEED FOR HER  
STALWART AND PASSIONATE SERVICE TO THE PEOPLE OF RHODE ISLAND**

Introduced By: Senators Ruggerio, Goodwin, McCaffrey, Algieri, and DiPalma

Date Introduced: March 30, 2017

Referred To: Recommended for Immediate Consideration

1           WHEREAS, It is with great sadness that we bid farewell to our colleague, our President,  
2 and our good friend, the Honorable M. Teresa Paiva Weed, who is leaving the Rhode Island  
3 Senate, District 13, after more than twenty-four years of devoted service to her constituents in  
4 Newport and Jamestown, and the citizens of the State of Rhode Island; and

5           WHEREAS, With a working-class background, the Honorable M. Teresa Paiva Weed is  
6 truly reflective of her constituency in Newport, her hometown and a city she loves deeply and  
7 represented with great vigor as not only their Senator, but moreover as Newport's Ambassador.  
8 Her strong environmental advocacy had its roots in her representation of the Town of Jamestown  
9 on beautiful Conanicut Island, and in her pride for the great state park known as Fort Adams, a  
10 place that the Senate soon learned more than they ever thought or could have hoped to know; and

11           WHEREAS, Senator M. Teresa Paiva Weed was first elected to the Rhode Island Senate  
12 in November of 1992. From 1997 through 2000, she served as the Senate's first woman  
13 chairperson of the Judiciary Committee, and from 2000 to 2002, she served as deputy chair of the  
14 Finance Subcommittee on Public Safety and the Environment. In 2002 through 2004, she served  
15 as vice chairwoman of the Senate Finance Committee and from January 2004 until 2008, she  
16 served as Rhode Island's first woman Senate Majority Leader, a position she held for five years;  
17 and

18           WHEREAS, Thoroughly earning the unqualified admiration and respect of her  
19 colleagues, Senator M. Teresa Paiva Weed was elected to serve as President of the Senate in

1 January of 2009, the first woman in Rhode Island's history to serve in this capacity, and a position  
2 that was conferred upon her four more times, and while she gained a lot of attention for shattering  
3 the glass ceiling as the first woman to hold this and many previous Senate posts, her rise in  
4 stature was also acclaimed by the Portuguese community in the state, who were so very proud of  
5 her Portuguese heritage; and

6 WHEREAS, During her tenure in the Senate, President M. Teresa Paiva Weed has been  
7 an exemplary role model and a tireless advocate for women in public service. She has  
8 spearheaded efforts to reform the Rhode Island welfare system, was instrumental in the passage  
9 of legislation that changed the manner in which judges are selected to a merit-based process, and  
10 won passage of many landmark bills, such as the property tax cap and legislation restructuring the  
11 Victim's Compensation Fund; and

12 WHEREAS, As President of the Senate, the Honorable M. Teresa Paiva Weed focused  
13 on education as a fundamental driver of our state's economic development, including winning  
14 enactment of legislation to repair crumbling schools, provide funding for full-day kindergarten  
15 for all communities in the state, championing a legislative action plan known as "Rhode to Work"  
16 to better equip students and the Rhode Island workforce with the skills needed for success in  
17 today's economy, and working with the state's public colleges and university to lay the foundation  
18 for a funding formula for state aid to higher education; and

19 WHEREAS, In addition to education priorities, President M. Teresa Paiva Weed has  
20 helped to enact legislation intended to improve Rhode Island's economic competitiveness  
21 including a package of bills known as "Making it Easy to Do Business in Rhode Island," aimed at  
22 cutting red tape, and leading the successful drive to enact a package of 28 bills known as  
23 "Moving the Needle"; and

24 WHEREAS, President M. Teresa Paiva Weed's commitment to the community has  
25 extended well beyond her service at the State House. She is also a member of a plethora of  
26 business and professional organizations and has earned myriad honors including: being named a  
27 National Legislator of the Year by MADD for her work in passing legislation enabling judges to  
28 require drunk drivers use ignition interlock devices, being presented with the Susan L. Farmer  
29 Award for her leadership for women and for her work in enacting temporary caregiver insurance,  
30 and being named Woman of the Year by the Rhode Island Commission on Women, the Newport  
31 Elks Lodge, Club Juventude Lusitana and The Portuguese American Citizens Committee of  
32 Rhode Island. In addition, she received the Extraordinary Woman Award and has been  
33 recognized by Housing First Rhode Island, Direct Action for Rights & Equality, Justice  
34 Assistance, and the Coalition Against Domestic Violence, and many more recognitions,

1 accomplishments and awards too numerous to mention; and

2 WHEREAS, In addition to her dedication and long hours at the State House, but certainly  
3 closest to her heart and vital in her life, President M. Teresa Paiva Weed is the loving mother of  
4 Nicole Beede, the cherished daughter of Marie and Arthur Paiva, and was the devoted wife of the  
5 late Mark Weed; and

6 WHEREAS, Although diminutive in stature, President M. Teresa Paiva Weed's presence  
7 on the podium engenders respect and trust from her fellow Senators, and her consensus-building  
8 leadership as well as her optimistic and forward-thinking agenda have earned her inclusive  
9 loyalty from her colleagues and constituents, and rendered the kind of positive changes in our  
10 state that will enrich generations to come; and

11 WHEREAS, With a quiet voice and a patient gavel, President M. Teresa Paiva Weed has  
12 been a paradigm of the very best leadership qualities, and each and every Senator will miss her in  
13 their own way for the special relationship she had with each of them. Whether there was a  
14 celebration or tragedy in their personal life, she was always ready with a big hug, or would make  
15 time to place a comforting phone call, or celebrate alongside each Senator. Oftentimes, from early  
16 in the morning until late into the evening, she was on the phone, helping the economy by keeping  
17 cell phone charging companies in business, although she quite often could have used a tracking  
18 device for her cell phone charger ... and her glasses; and

19 WHEREAS, President M. Teresa Paiva Weed has presided over the Rhode Island Senate  
20 with unsurpassed intellect, compassion and humor during endless long hours of consideration on  
21 the hundreds of measures each year, and she will be greatly missed by the entire membership, the  
22 Senate staff, and observers of the legislative process; now, therefore be it

23 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations  
24 hereby extends its most heartfelt gratitude to the Honorable M. Teresa Paiva Weed for her service  
25 to the Rhode Island Senate and the people of Rhode Island. We moreover wholeheartedly  
26 congratulate her on becoming the first women to serve as President of the Hospital Association of  
27 Rhode Island. We commend her on this richly deserved personal achievement and fervently hope  
28 they have an endless supply of tea at the Hospital Association; and be it further

29 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to  
30 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to the Honorable M. Teresa Paiva Weed.

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